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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, October 14, 2003

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Birkholz, Koops Testify Against ‘Meth’ Labs

Senate committee votes to recommend legislation to tighten penalties

LANSING—Methamphetamine is a highly toxic and addictive drug, state Sen. Patty Birkholz (R-Saugatuck Twp) and Allegan County Sheriff Blaine Koops said today while testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee on a package of bills that will increase fines and penalties for persons who operate a ‘meth’ lab or are found in possession of the illegal substance.

“There are long term problems associated with this illegal drug,” said Birkholz. “It causes birth defects, behavioral problems and disrupts families, leaving many victims in its wake. This legislation will help eradicate the problem and allow for increased law enforcement and penalties.”

“This is not just an issue for law enforcement, this is a social problem we need to confront head on,” said Koops. “This is a drug that will permeate the entire state and we need to take it seriously to do everything in our power to assist Michigan’s citizens and make a difference.”

The Committee unanimously voted to recommend the package of bills that will include methamphetamine and ecstasy with heroine and cocaine delivery/ possession offenses so the punishment will increase with the amount of meth delivered or possessed. It will also make the possession or transport of anhydrous ammonia (an ingredient in meth) in a non-approved container a five-year felony and increase penalties for the theft of anhydrous ammonia.

Also testifying in support of the legislation was Fred Anderson, Allegan County Prosecutor and Rick Hoyer, Allegan Chief of Police.

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Comments from Sen. Birkholz on the Meth Lab Legislation are available for download on the Senate Majority Audiowire at www.senate.michigan.gov/gop or by calling the radio hotline at 517-373-4000. You can also download a photo from the Senate Majority Photowire at the same web address.